

REMARKS

Claims 11-18 are pending. Claims 11 and 12 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Applicants respectfully assert that the finality of the outstanding Office Action is improper and should be withdrawn. The Examiner noted that “[A]ll claims are directed to the same invention claimed in the application prior to entry of the submission under 37 CFR 1.114 and could have been finally rejected on the grounds and art of record in the next Office Action if they had been entered in the application prior to entry under 37 CFR 1.114.” However, the Examiner stated, in the Action dated July 30, 2004, that “the claims as written do not limit the invention to chronological control of individual users” (see pg. 3, item 5). Applicants then amended the claims to specifically include this feature, therefore it is not possible that the claims are directed to the same invention since a new feature (at least according to the Examiner) was added to the claims in the Supplemental Amendment which was filed with the Request for Continued Examination. The same holds true for the statement in item 6 of the Action dated July 30, 2004, where the Examiner stated that the claims do not limit the invention to individual measurement of current drawn by each additional user. Again, the claims were amended to include this feature and the Examiner was referred back to Applicants’ previous remarks, which the Examiner stated were unpersuasive because the claims were not so limited. Therefore, by the Examiner’s own admission, the claims could not have been drawn to the same invention prior to submitting the previous response. Thus, Applicants request that the finality of the outstanding Action be withdrawn.

Claims 11-18 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Jouper, U.S. Patent 5,754,445. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 11 and 12 have been amended to clarify that the activation of all *connected* users occurs in chronological sequence, while simultaneously taking into the consideration the different current requirements during and after activation. Further, claims 11 and 12 recite that it is monitored whether or not the available current is exceeded. These features are not taught or suggested by Jouper.

According to the system of Jouper, a plurality of power units 14 are connected to a power distribution circuit 12. If there is an additional user, however, it is only checked whether sufficient energy resources are available to supply energy to the additional user. If sufficient energy resources are not available, the additionally connected user (electronic device) is not supplied with energy. Thus, Jouper is only directed to those situations in which another user, in addition to users already connected and supplied with energy, is to be connected to an energy source.

According to the claimed invention, a plurality of users are connected to an energy source. Although this may be shown in Jouper, the claims relate to the activation of all users *already connected* to the energy source and Jouper only relates to activation of the user to be connected last chronologically. An advantage of the claimed invention is the reduction of the peak load on the energy source. According to the claimed invention, the peak load is reduced in that activation of the connected users occurs in chronological sequence. In this connection, it is taken into account that, during the activation phase, power requirements (per user) are initially higher but then decline to a substantially lower value. The claimed method is achieved with the aid of an intelligent control system, which simultaneously checks the user connections for errors, controls the power limiting feature accordingly, and repeatedly conducts checks of the user connection, all the while ensuring that the total available current (in this case, I_{Rmax}) is not exceeded.

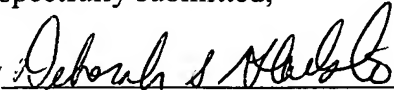
In light of the foregoing, the features of claims 11 and 12 are not taught or suggested by Jouper. The remaining claims are allowable at least due to their respective dependencies. Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 449122030500.

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Respectfully submitted,

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